

Appl. No. : 09/965,786
Filed : September 27, 2001

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed July 16, 2003. As this Action was Final, Applicant has filed herewith a Request for Continued Prosecution to seek continued review of the application, including consideration of this Response.

Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13-16 and 19 remain pending in the application after this Response.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13-16 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hedrick (USPN 6,135,884) in view of Raven (USPN 5,429,361). The Examiner asserts that Hedrick teaches an information system associated with a gaming system, that system including a player tracking device, the player tracking device including a card reader, keypad, at least one speaker and a display. The Examiner indicates that Hedrick is silent regarding the determination of player eligibility to information, but that Raven teaches the display of information in correlation to player tracking input.

Applicant asserts that the claims are allowable over the cited prior art. Applicant notes that independent Claims 1, 8 and 19 are all directed to an invention in which multi-media information is transmitted from a host to a player tracking device of a gaming machine. As recited in Claims 1 and 8, video and audio information comprising the multi-media information is presented via a display and at least one speaker of the player tracking device. As recited in Claim 19, the multi-media information is stored at the player tracking device for presentation and presented by the player tracking device independent of player activity.

As the Examiner indicates, Hedrick discloses a gaming machine including a player tracking device. The configuration of the Hedrick gaming machine and associated player tracking device are,

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however, different than the present invention. Hedrick discloses that the player tracking device may have an associated display (313, Figure 4(a)) for displaying messages such as "INSERT CARD." (Col. 7, lines 6-10). The gaming machine also includes a main display (220, Figure 2) configured to display game results (such as spinning reels). (Col. 5, lines 42-46). The gaming machine further includes a secondary display (219, Figure 2) which is configured to display secondary game information. (Col. 5, lines 56-58) or even tertiary information such as billboard information, advertisements and the like. (Col. 3, lines 10-20).

In Hedrick's configuration, the player tracking device does not include speakers. This fact is reflected in Figure 5, which shows the electronic architecture for the gaming machine. Reference is made in several parts of Hedrick to the use of speakers, including at Col. 7, lines 15-20. As indicated, however, in Hedrick's configuration, the speakers are associated with the main and/or secondary display, and not the player tracking device. Thus, information is displayed by the secondary display of the gaming machine and via speakers, but those components are essentially independent from the player tracking display and player tracking device.

Most importantly, Hedrick does not teach or suggest providing multi-media information to the player tracking device and presenting that information with an associated player tracking device display and at least one speaker. As indicated above, while Hedrick does include a secondary display for displaying tertiary information, such information is not provided to that display via the player tracking device. In fact, Hedrick specifically teaches that the player tracking display is an LED, small LCD, or dot matrix display having sixteen character, fourteen segment display, thus configured only to display alpha-numeric information and the like. (Col. 9, lines 21). While it is also stated that

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such information could be displayed on the main or secondary displays, it is clear that the such information only comprises the minimal alpha-numeric information. In other words, to the extent any multi-media information is displayed on the secondary display, such information is not associated in any way with the player tracking device but comes from an independent source.

This is further made clear by Hedrick's disclosure of a multimedia block (615, Figure 6). As disclosed, the multimedia module is configured to accept inputs from various sources, such as television broadcasting and the like. As disclosed, the multimedia block can be mounted directly to the CPU or game board (502, Figure 5) or act as an interface between the CPU and main display. Thus, as disclosed, the multimedia or tertiary information is routed to the multimedia block and then presented via the main or secondary displays and associated speakers. The multimedia information is not, however, routed to the player tracking device. (Col. 13, lines 21-49).

In sum, Applicant asserts that the prior art, including Hedrick, does not disclose the present invention in which multimedia information is provided from a host to a player tracking device and then presented via the player tracking device on an associated display and one or more speakers.

Claims 2-5, 7, 9-11 and 13-16

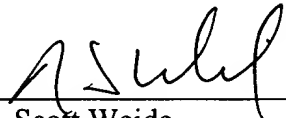
These claims are believed to be allowable for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable independent claim.

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Summary

Applicants assert that Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13-16 and 19 are in a condition for allowance and respectfully request a notice as to the same. If any matters remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

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